

## Here Lies History:

### Oahu Cemetery, a Mirror of Old Honolulu

Richard A. Greer

There is something revolting in following the remains of the dead to yonder open ground, where men, cattle and horses trample upon the depository of the dead in reckless confusion, without even a mud wall to defend it.<sup>1</sup>

The date was January, 1836; the speaker, Seamen's Chaplain John Diell. "Yonder open ground" was the dismal burying lot by Kawaiahao Church. While its defunct tenants were probably less sensitive to environmental shortcomings than the Rev. Diell, his remarks were timely. Unfortunately, they lacked the power to trigger action.

This had to be forced by real pressures—a growing foreign population and a swelling influx of transient visitors, some already in the grip of fatal illness. Whaling ships dumped the disabled into pitifully inadequate hospitals maintained by foreign consuls for ailing sailors, chiefly American and British. Too often these institutions functioned as dispatching points for the graveyard. Then, too, this was the great age of tuberculosis, the "white death". A sea voyage was—for those with means—a favorite prescription. But when it failed to work, the moribund traveler either found his last home in the trackless ocean or among strangers chosen by fate to be his final companions. The common hazards of life took their toll, which was multiplied by primitive medical practices. So in Honolulu, as everywhere, the cemetery was more an integral part of the place, less a psychologically alienated symbol of what science has yet to achieve.

Sometime during the years 1840–1843, the government granted "an eligible lot" to a cemetery association, but the gentlemen involved limited themselves to signing a subscription list.<sup>2</sup> Thus it was that at the end of June, 1844, the *Polynesian*, surveying the municipal scene, numbered A Public Cemetery among "Honolulu Wants."

When shall we see some shady nook in one of our adjoining valleys, turned into a Hawaiian Mount Auburn, Laurel Hill, or Pere La Chaise? Men of humanity and taste,

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*Photographs accompanying this article were taken by Charles Anderson, a 1967 graduate of the Kamehameha School for Boys. Special thanks for valuable help go to Mr. John Armitage, Assistant Vice President, Hawaiian Trust Co., and Mr. Jack R. Davis, Superintendent, Oahu Cemetery.*

stir yourselves in this cause. The dead will rise up in judgment against us, if this is not speedily done. Already, the old resting place of the departed, has become an overflowing Golgotha, and the sick or dying shudder at the thought of where their dust must be deposited. A barren, treeless burying place, with its dilapidated tombs, and broken head stones, is a revolting object.<sup>3</sup>

Revulsion carried the day, and action followed. On August 19, a "Proposed Plan for a Public Cemetery in the vicinity of Honolulu"—with attached map and subscription list—went the rounds downtown.<sup>4</sup> The chosen spot was the mauka part of a plot then being cultivated by Mataio Kekuanaoa, the Governor of Oahu. Indeed, the necropolitan area itself contained a taro patch. As described, the projected graveyard lay just above the second bridge, on the left hand side of the road to Nuuanu Valley. The approximately four and a half acres (4.38, actually) were bounded mauka by the lane leading from the Nuuanu road to the Rev. Lowell Smith's cottage. It exists today as Robinson's Lane; even in 1844 James Robinson's place ran along the lane's mauka edge. Nuuanu Road was the Waikiki limit; makai lay land leased to Dr. G. P. Judd. The site, said the Proposal, ". . . can be seen from the harbor and town, from which it is but a short distance, is easily irrigated, and very accessible for carriages."<sup>5</sup>

Although no land grant had been made yet, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Judd) had given his promise that one would be. Kekuanaoa was to get \$300 for his lease and improvements, and estimates for building a makai fence and laying out the grounds totaled \$350.<sup>6</sup> A bargain it was: A Public Cemetery of size for \$650. The grant did come through on March 4, 1846. Made out to the cemetery directors—J. F. B. Marshall, William Paty, J. J. Jarves and Charles Brewer—it stipulated that: (1) the place should be used for no other purpose than burying; (2) the cemetery should be well taken care of, enclosed with a good wall, and planted with trees; (3) the laws of the kingdom would apply to the locale, the directors having charge nevertheless of it.<sup>7</sup>

Forty-eight Honoluluans—not including old Alexander Adams, who signed but later backed out—subscribed for fifty-nine lots at \$12 each, for a pledged total of \$708.<sup>8</sup> Several others soon joined the project.

The prospectus also laid out a plan of action:

*Finances:* Open a subscription for the purchase of lots, to be fifteen feet square—or to contain 225 square feet—at \$12 each, with the understanding that the choice of lots would be auctioned off after the grounds were ready.

*Government:* A meeting of subscribers would form an association, choose officers, and name an executive committee (initially known as the committee of management) to attend to building the wall, laying out the grounds, selling the choice of lots, etc.

The object of all was to be ". . . a spot that shall be an ornament to the town, and an honor to the Residents."<sup>9</sup> To the ones who should bring this about the *Polynesian* promised a certain anonymous immortality: their work would ". . . remain forever a gratifying memorial of their sensibility and good taste."<sup>10</sup> Good taste as exemplified in the 1844 plan provided a ground of 300 lots, with tree-bordered carriage avenues and foot paths.<sup>11</sup>

The subscribers wasted no time. They met at C. Brewer and Company's counting room on Monday evening, August 20. Marshall called to order, Dr. R. W. Wood took the chair on Marshall's motion, and Marshall himself became secretary pro tem. J. R. Von Pfister proposed that the group call itself the Nuuanu Cemetery Association—adopted—and it was time to frame a constitution.<sup>12</sup> Its highlights: (1) officers would be president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer; (2) a committee of management would take charge of cemetery operations; (3) the committee would set aside a part of the cemetery for burial of poverty-stricken seamen and foreigners, and another part for sale of single lots; (4) an annual meeting of the N.C.A. would choose officers and hear reports of the treasurer and the committee of management.

Very good; but as for Hiram Grimes, visions of ugliness danced in his head. He saw to it that the committee got the power to prevent erection of any "unsightly or inappropriate" buildings or enclosures—perhaps with a shudder at the painful afterimage of some marble orchard monstrosity sired by misguided affection or elephantiasis of the ego.<sup>13</sup>

Account books opened late in November, 1844. From the twenty-first of that month to July 3, 1845, the association sold 58 family lots (at \$12) and 4 single lots (at \$10).<sup>14</sup> Thus in its first seven and a half months the N.C.A. disposed of about one-fifth of its plot as originally planned. During the same period, expenses accumulated. Most of the money went for labor, trees, and rope; the biggest single item was the \$300 paid for the ground itself.<sup>15</sup> The cemetery's early history was one of continually shaky finances, which inspired repeated efforts to drum up more revenue.

In November, too, the graveyard received its first tenant—one H. Wolley, a seaman from the *Josephine*, then in port. He died at the U.S. hospital, and his funeral came on Monday, the twenty-fifth.<sup>16</sup> There is a special melancholy in the thought of Wolley and his successors—young fellows, most of them, and at least once full of hope and adventure—being shoveled under Nuuanu's earth. They found little dignity in death; they perished and were buried unmarked in the seaman's lot at \$2.50 a head.<sup>17</sup>

Item: April, 1852: Burial 3 seamen in Seaman's Lot	\$ 7.50
Item: November 13, 1852: Burial 5 seamen	\$12.50
Item: April, 1854: Burial 6 seamen, U.S. Hosp.	\$15.00
Item: January 1, 1856: Burial 9 seamen, U.S. Hosp.	\$22.50

Poor boys; the treasurer, doubtless pressed for time, accounted for them in batches.<sup>18</sup> Add the paupers, homeless wanderers, transient strangers suddenly cut off in the far Pacific, and it is small wonder that some plots on cemetery maps are labeled "old, unmarked graves", "unknown", "believed full".

Certainly the treasurer kept a sharp eye on the money situation, and his orb possessed the not unusual characteristic of magnifying outgo while minifying income. Thus, when the association spent \$7.00 for printing certificates, this was noted with alarm as a "heavy expense item", and an effort was made

to retrieve the sum from Jarves of the *Polynesian* on the ground that the Mission press would probably have done the work for nothing.<sup>19</sup> But there were bright spots. The proposed sale of choice of lots—at 5 p.m. on Saturday, June 21, 1845—brought in \$147.<sup>20</sup> Most of the proprietors showed up. Bidding was spirited. Joe Booth, tavern and hotel keeper, bought the first choice for \$12, and others went for from \$1 to \$6. Some 45 choices were sold. Only a little over half of the ground had been as yet laid out, and that was reported so uniform in surface that there was little chance for display of personal taste.<sup>21</sup>

A progress report—doubtless timed to whet interest—had appeared earlier in the day in the *Polynesian*. It answered complaints at the delay in readying the ground for selection of lots: Of the committee of management—Marshall, Paty, Jarves and Brewer—only the first had found time to do anything. Reported he of Messrs. P. J. & B.: “. . . as far as good wishes could go, I have had their entire and hearty cooperation.”<sup>22</sup>

More encouraging items noted were:

1. Enlargement of family lots from 15 to 24 feet square;
2. Planting of 1,500 trees (Could an extra zero have come to rest here? With some 345 trees to the acre, the cemetery would have eclipsed the Amazonian rain forest, requiring funeral parties to hack their way through choking labyrinths in search of grave sites);
3. Creation of a circular mound in the center, reserved for a small open chapel (plan exhibited, cost: \$200);
4. Laying out of lots for strangers and indigent seamen;
5. Erection of new gates on Nuuanu Road, facing the main cemetery avenue;
6. Division of family lots into four single lots of 12 feet square each, setting the price of single lots at \$12 and raising that of family lots to \$20 (these changes to take effect after selection of lots already subscribed for);
7. Provision of avenues 14 and 8 feet wide, with a large central avenue of 27 feet;
8. Building of a bridge over the stream where it cut the main avenue;
9. Sixty-six lots taken up, at \$12 each;
10. Several interments of strangers within their enclosure.

The taro patch had been left undisturbed, as the committee intended to convert it later into an ornamental garden.<sup>23</sup>

The *Polynesian* urged lot buyers to enclose their purchases at once, and to aid in the work of beautification. Marshall had found algaroba and koa trees both “handsome and appropriate”, but needing too much care from him when young. Owners should plant and care for their own trees.<sup>24</sup>

Some subscribers had failed to pay up. But the cemetery needed a good wall or fence on the front side, bordering the road. The dilapidated adobe ruin then extant would hardly do. And as for the makai boundary between Dr.



Judd's place and the cemetery, for want of a proper stone wall, a row of ti sticks had been strung across. The \$200 chapel, which would be a conspicuous ornament from the harbor, and the hiring of a superintendent were in limbo, awaiting healthier finances. Of course, letting the overseer farm the ground not yet separated into lots would be a drawing card.<sup>25</sup>

Seven months later things appeared to be going smoothly enough: foreigners generally had contributed to meet expenses, the trees were flourishing, many lots had been appropriately enclosed or otherwise ornamented, and the grounds were tastefully laid out and decorated.<sup>26</sup>

A windfall came at the end of October, 1846, when 42 ship captains and others contributed \$107 toward the cost of putting a neat railing around the ground set apart for burial of foreign seamen, many of whom were already sleeping there.<sup>27</sup>

More or less routine development characterized the following thirteen or fourteen years; the N.C.A. traversed a plateau which had, nevertheless, a definite downward slope. Highlights of the period from 1846 to 1859 were often keyed to association and trustees' meetings. Some were:

1. October, 1847:

A hundred dollars given to J. F. B. Marshall—then about to leave on a trip to the U.S.—to buy an iron gate; the amount left in the treasury after this transfusion was to go for building that long-delayed stone wall along the makai boundary (Dr. Judd first indicating what proportion of the cost he would pay);

Instruction of the secretary-treasurer to keep a record of all persons interred, with place of birth, age, etc.;

Committee of management directed to have the cemetery grounds surveyed and a copy of this survey given to each subscriber;

Delivery of the cemetery deed from the Hawaiian government, said deed to be legally recorded.<sup>28</sup>

2. February, 1852:

Executive committee (now so called) to appoint a manager or managers to enclose, sell, survey, and otherwise manage cemetery lands in the best way;

Increase in price of family lots to \$50, and of quarter lots to \$20.

Appropriation of six half-lots on the makai side of the cemetery for burial of strangers, at \$10 each;

Levying of a charge of \$5, or less, each grave, for maintaining the enclosure.<sup>29</sup>

3. August, 1855:

Authorization of the executive committee to alter the wall along the lane to the Rev. Lowell Smith's;

J. F. B. Marshall to help in arranging records of lot ownership;

Instruction of secretary-treasurer to address all non-resident lot owners, to find out what they wanted done with their lots (the cemetery was filling up);

Executive committee directed to entertain the subject of buying an additional piece of land from Dr. Judd.<sup>30</sup>

In March, 1856, Judd needed money. He offered to sell about half of his lot adjoining the cemetery and fronting Judd Street. The dimensions: 370 by 430 feet, or thereabouts. The area: some three and a half acres. Laid out in lots 25 feet square, and sold at a price of \$50 per lot, the plot would bring \$12,500 to the N.C.A. Deducting half for avenues and expenses would still leave over \$6,000. Judd offered to sell for \$3,000.<sup>31</sup> Apparently the deal did not materialize just at this time, though eventually the graveyard did take in all of the former Judd property.

The space crisis, long foreshadowed, came to a head in 1859. On January 13, the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* spread alarming news: The old cemetery was nearly full; not a single lot was for sale, unless by private owners; the Masons, wanting a lot for the lodge, had on the way an elegant iron fence, but no place to put it. Action now was the word. Where could the cemetery expand? Kapalama? Waikiki?

The N.C.A. counted 40 Honolulu members.<sup>32</sup> But a meeting called on January 21 failed to attract a quorum. Result: Nothing done.<sup>33</sup> Of course, only a few owners of 1844 vintage were either on the island or still alive elsewhere.<sup>34</sup> Fortunately, several of those who had managed to get out of Honolulu under their own steam had sold their lots to permanent residents, thus staving off the critical day.<sup>35</sup>

"Who Cares for the Dead?" asked the *Polynesian*.<sup>36</sup> The Rev. S. C. Damon did, and proved it by writing a letter to the editor. Damon, secretary and treasurer of the N.C.A. since October, 1847, had taken over active management after Marshall's departure. And he had long been pressed to find burial lots for seamen, strangers and foreign residents. Back in 1856 he had urged—vainly—action to get more ground. Now he listed the facts: (1) the N.C.A. had only one lot—and that recently bought from a private member—at its disposal; (2) one-third of the cemetery was too rocky for burials; (3) in the seamen's portion it was impossible to sink a grave to the proper depth; anyhow, this lot was full; (4) often foreigners wanted to buy family lots, but none had been for sale for several years; (5) only transferring lots allowed applicants to get them; (6) the foreign population was growing; (7) the N.C.A. had never been incorporated, and this should be considered.<sup>37</sup>

A disturbing example showed the truth of Damon's words about crowding. W. A. Cooper owned a quarter lot. He was buried in it on August 8, 1859. During the next four months, fourteen others were packed into the other three quarters: a Guamanian, a Tahitian, and a Negro sailor, a Chinaman, a Hawaiian or part-Hawaiian child, and nine haoles—one old resident and eight seamen.<sup>38</sup>

This "shallow contiguity" of many graveyard tenants was certainly a problem, but there were others: There had been irregularities in disposing of lots; the climate compelled quick burial, and this required the sexton of Damon's Bethel to dig—not deeply—on short notice, and to rush through the other details of funerals. To settle fears of pestilence then rife in the

cemetery's neighborhood, mounds of earth had been thrown up to better cover the part set aside as a potter's field.<sup>39</sup>

Damon was doing all the work, alone and unsupported, while his appeals for aid went unheeded. A bonus for the overburdened chaplain might have been the peace pervading Nuuanu's acres, in contrast to the dubious activities—both diurnal and nocturnal—so evident in other purlieus of the whalers' port. Observing Damon's solitary labors, the *Advertiser* handed down a windy but justified verdict: "It must stand recorded as a matter of reproach against the residents of Honolulu, that for the past eight years there has been great supineness and indifference on the subject."<sup>40</sup>

Thus prodded, Honoluluans stirred. What the *Polynesian* called the town's "necropolitan affairs" looked up after a N.C.A. meeting on June 10, 1859, resolved to get a charter of incorporation, the better to care not only for association members, but also for the ". . . increasing number of death-stricken strangers whose only call upon . . . hospitality is a modest request for six feet of earth."<sup>41</sup>

Another meeting on June 14 adopted a charter; this was read and passed in the Privy Council two days later, and delivered to the 40 members of the new Oahu Cemetery Association on July 8.<sup>42</sup> This charter, with some alterations made in 1908, remains in effect today.

By this time the expansion question had been settled for the nonce. Not one to let matters slide, Damon—acting on his own—engaged a plot and promised to pay \$1,000 for it. This land lay on the Waikiki side of Nuuanu Road, nearly opposite the old cemetery. Damon's deed drew disapproval, but efforts to find alternative sites were defeated by dust, distance and drought. Therefore the purchase—from Messrs. E. Brown and H. Macfarlane—went through, and the O.C.A. took over this and all other property of the now-defunct N.C.A.<sup>43</sup>

Bursting with youthful sap, the O.C.A. sped into action. It decided to concentrate first on the old grounds. These were re-distributed generally, in the part formerly laid out for gardens; rocks were blasted, hills leveled, hollows filled up, and lots bought from owners long since gone. Many eligible family lots were thus created. The *Advertiser* harangued owners: Beautify the cemetery: ". . . Redeem it from the forlorn aspect it has presented hitherto." The slothful could not plead inconvenience; the trustees were poised to perform such aesthetic chores "tastefully and economically" for those not wishing to invest effort.<sup>44</sup>

As the rejuvenated board churned through 1860 it:

1. Appointed Sam Savidge to issue permits for burial;
2. Named Dr. Robinson superintendent;
3. Raised burial rates to \$20 each outside private lots and to \$10 each inside;
4. Set up a committee to determine lot ownership and boundaries, and to issue proper deeds (heretofore chronic sources of trouble);

5. Sickened Honolulu newspapers onto a lethargic public, by urging the editors to ventilate the association's financial embarrassments;

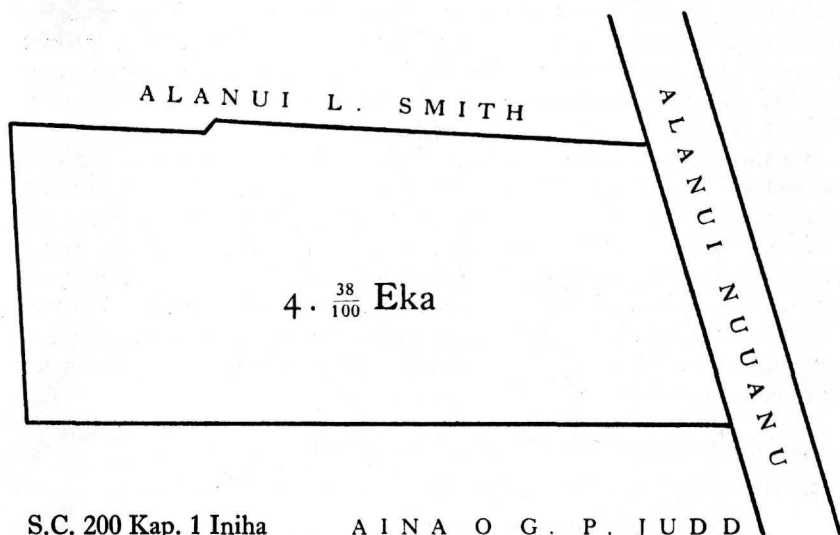
6. Received a general large-scale map of the cemetery and ordered the numbering of subdivisions.<sup>45</sup> The numbering was completed, and the resulting plan registered on March 22, 1861.<sup>46</sup>

A notable change came early in this latter year. Up to this time, the N.C.A. and the O.C.A. had been funeral directors as well as cemetery operators. But in February William Ladd—himself destined to be interred under Nuuanu's sod within two years—made a contract with C. E. Williams, pioneer undertaker. By its terms Williams was to care for the hearse and harness, feed the horse, dig graves and attend funerals. His fee: \$7.50 each burial. He acted as the O.C.A.'s collecting agent, deducting his own share. If, however, the O.C.A. lost its fee, Williams got nothing.<sup>47</sup>

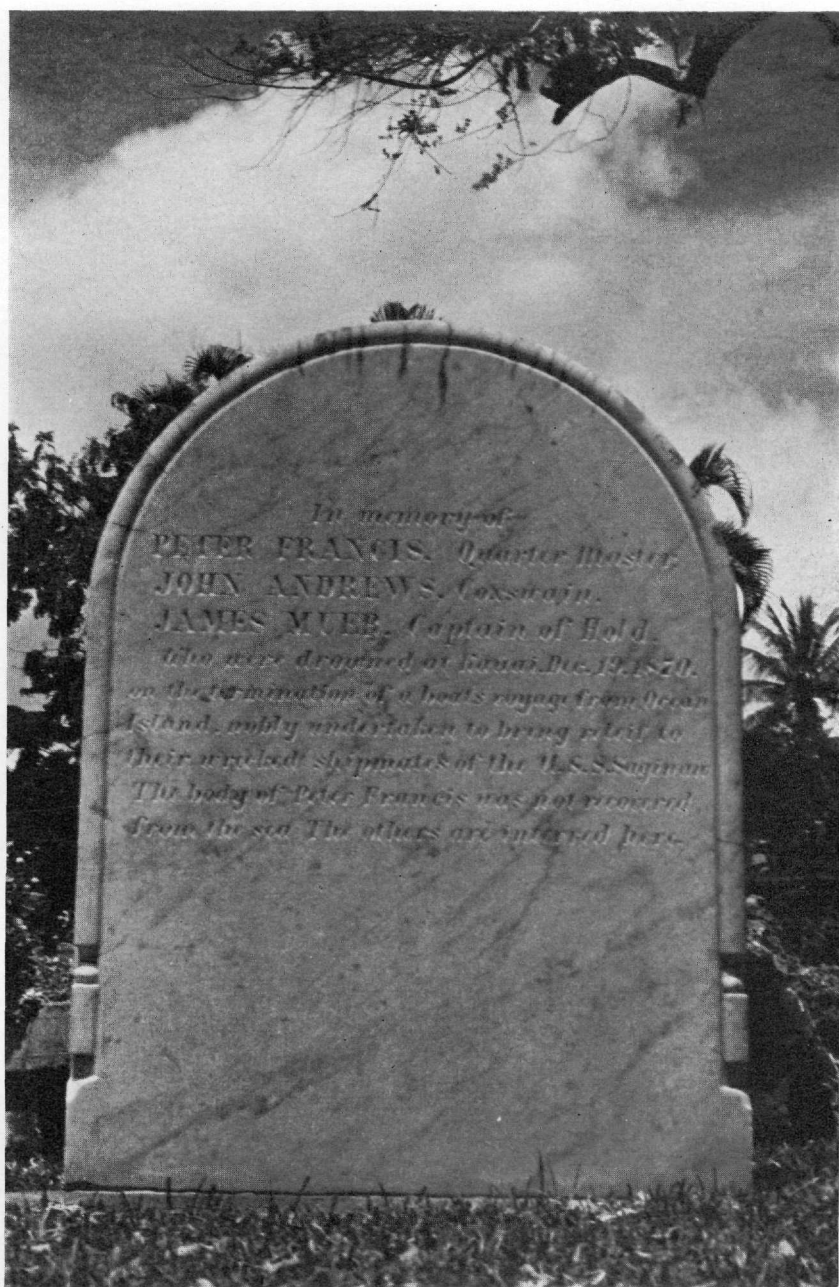
Such, in brief, is the early history of the Nuuanu burying ground. During those times the cemetery served its utilitarian purpose of receiving corpses. But as the years passed it became, inevitably, a storehouse of local memorabilia.

*The Cemetery Layout.* He who would have easy access to its treasures demands a key. One was forged in March, 1861, and it still works well today. Important in the background of this achievement are these features:

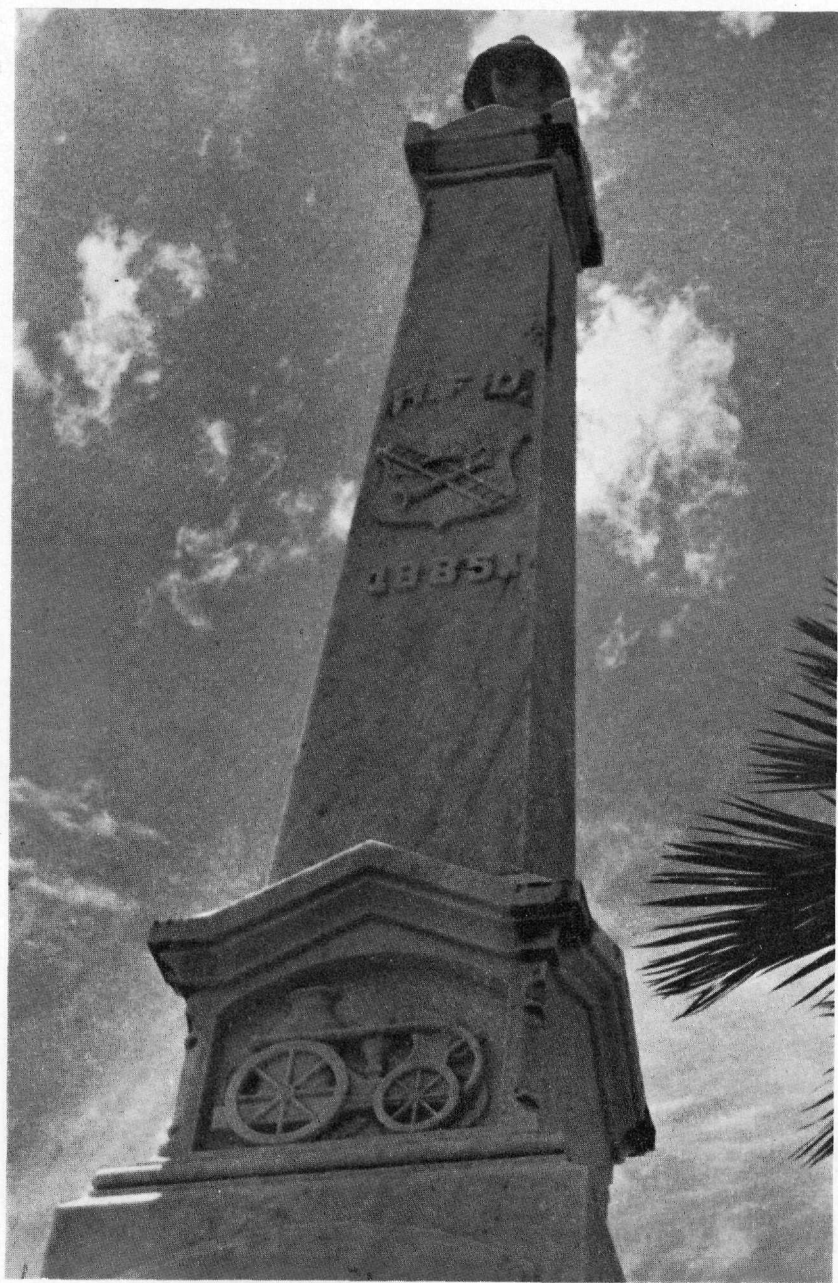
1. The original plot was measured in six-foot fathoms and fractions. The boundaries ran: mauka, 671 feet along Smith's Lane; ewa, 307 feet; makai, 719 feet along Dr. Judd's place; waikiki, 312 feet along Nuuanu Road:



2. When the cemetery was first laid out (just prior to the first sale of choice of lots), the lots were designated by letter and number. The triangular section above the central avenue, and running along Nuuanu Road, was disregarded in this system, and was not sold. The resulting grid was:



Unaccounted for on the Saginaw headstone is the leader of the relief expedition, Lt. John G. Talbot, the ship's executive officer. His remains were sent to relatives in Kentucky.



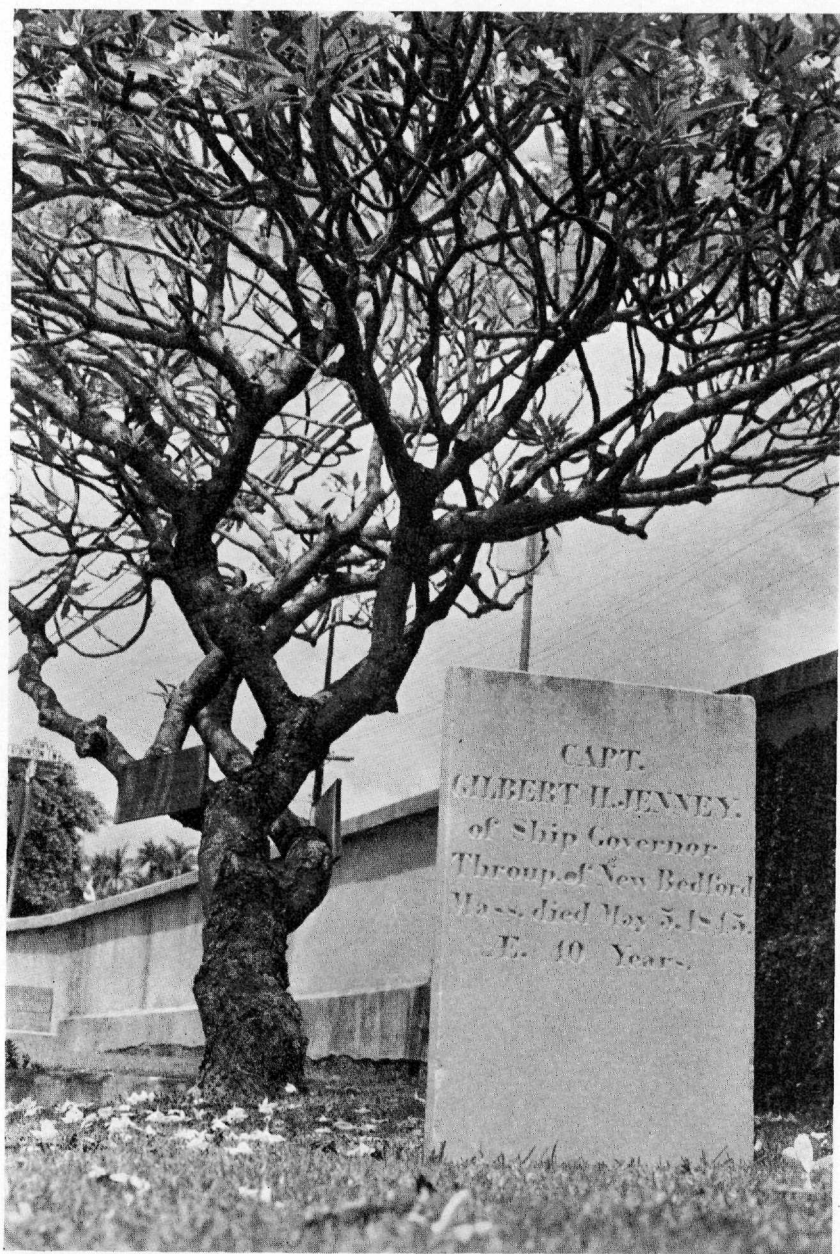
*For more than eighty years the H.F.D. monument has watched over the slumbers of those who dedicated their lives to this public service.*



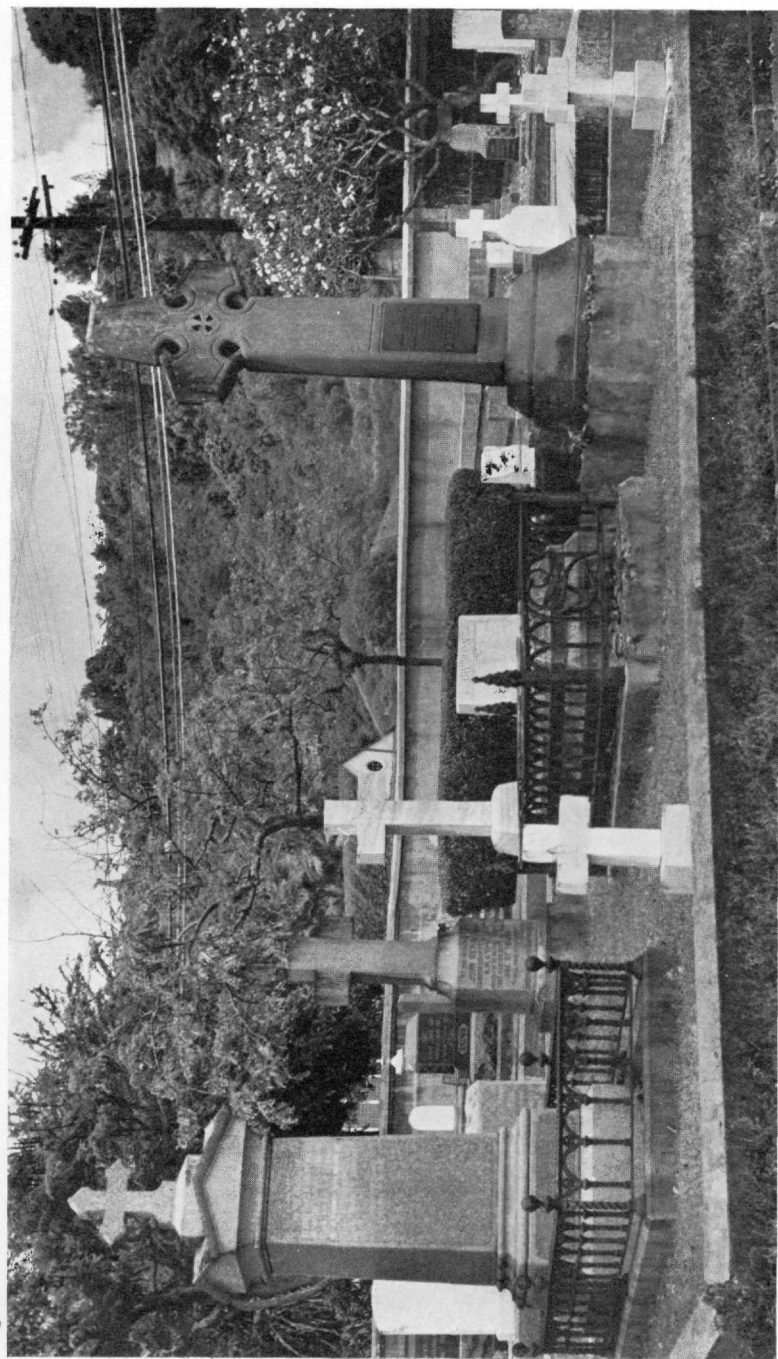


*The Havannah monument memorializes six of its men who died over a period of two and a half years off Cape Horn, at sea, at Valparaiso, and at Honolulu.*





*Captain Jenney's headstone rises in what appears to be an empty corner of the cemetery. Actually, the area is packed with unmarked graves. To the left along the wall stretches the remnant of the Seamen's Lot.*



*Lot 163, the officers' section of the British Naval Lot, still features the once-popular cast-iron fences.  
The tomb so surrounded in the center of the photo is Captain Meacham's grave (1858).*



L1	K1	J1	I1	H1	G1	F1	E1	D1	C1	NUUANU ROAD	
									C4		
CENTRAL AVENUE											
L5		I5	H5						C5	B5	A
		Not sold at the first sale. Later divided into 48 quarter lots.									1
											2
											3
											4
											5
											6
											7
											8
L8		J8			G8				C8	B8	

Space was left along both the mauka and makai boundaries; the depth of the layout ewa from Nuuanu Road was 400 feet (measured along the makai side of the central avenue), leaving a strip of some 235 feet on the ewa side undeveloped.<sup>48</sup>

3. Early in 1861 a renumbered map of the cemetery was produced. This dropped the old letter-figure designations and replaced them with numbers only. The revised plan also added a row of lots—of five different sizes—along the cemetery's makai boundary, and laid out several rows of lots ewa of what had been row L. For the most part, the 1861 designations remain unchanged today in what is now known as Section II—the original cemetery. Closing up pathways has provided more burial space, commonly labeled by putting a letter after the adjacent lot number; this gives, for example, lot 175A next to lot 175.

4. A widening of Nuuanu Avenue took a ten-foot strip off the waikiki edge of Section II. This eliminated nearly all of lots 155-158 (these numbers are shown on current cemetery maps without boundaries); a similar fate befell lots 3, 4, 6, 7 and 9, which have now entirely disappeared from the layout.<sup>49</sup>

*The Markers.* A panoramic view of the cemetery gives the typical old burying-ground impression: a heterogeneous forest of stone (and a few metal) protuberances, most of no distinctive size or shape, punctuated here and there by egregious obelisks and columns. Following graveyard convention, most of the latter are broken off to indicate grief and loss. The earlier markers—from the 1840s through the 1870s—tend to modest and simple design, but are more likely to bear informative or sentimental inscriptions. In toto they form a minor catalog of the afflictions and accidents of the day. This one drowned; that one fell from the mast; a third succumbed to the ravages of consumption.

Land held by Judd										New US Navy lot																																																																																																							
9	10	11	12	17	18	23	24	29	30	31	36	42	43	44	49	50	51	77	78	79	105	106	107	112	113	114	119	120	121	122	126	127	128	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	152	153	154																																																																			
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4	5	A5	B7	20	Beth.	20A	Dowd	26	33	34	39	46	47	G6	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154
1	2	A1	A2	15	Lodge	15A	Paty	27	Damon	34	Ladd	40	47	G6	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154
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CENTRAL AVENUE										SMITH'S LANE																																																																																											
155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256
155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256
155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256

Ex. C1 = 1845-1861  
162 = 1861-1967

(Recorded in Lib. 14; Fol. 314)

But cluttered as Oahu Cemetery appears, the ratio of markers to burials is quite low in much of Section II. The reason: A high proportion of the deceased were seamen, "strangers" (such as death-dogged ship passengers and short-term residents), or indigents.

### *The Guide*

The accompanying map is the 1861 production. It is, however, wholly adequate. The following descriptive notices are keyed to lot numbers; changes or additions are noted as required.

Lots 155-158. This triangular patch was established in the 1840's as the Captains' Lot (nearer the central avenue) and the Seamen's Lot (mauka). Originally these lots extended ten feet waikiki of the present wall. Of the 533 cemetery burials from November, 1844 to March, 1861, 163 were recorded "Seamen's Lot" (first burial, November 24, 1844); 13 "New Seamen's Lot" (first burial, December 20, 1859); and 17 "Captains' Lot" (first burial, March 11, 1845). The oldest stone here is that of Capt. Gilbert Jenney of New Bedford, Massachusetts, master of the American whaleship *Governor Troup*, who died on May 5, 1845. The whole area is packed with marked and—by far the greater number—unmarked graves; the upper part was, before the street widening, a stretch of little mounds. When the road work commenced, at least thirty-three unidentified remains—from above and below the central avenue—were moved across Nuuanu to Section I.<sup>50</sup>

Lot 159. Christopher H. Lewers, a partner in the firm of Lewers and Dickson, had lived in Honolulu for over twenty-five years at the time of his death. He left a widow and five children ". . . for whom he provided an ample property by insurance of his life in several companies, the whole amounting to \$35,000."<sup>51</sup>

Lots 160 and 161. E. S. Benson and J. B. McClurg, respectively, were the original owners; the N.C.A. acquired these lots later, and they became Strangers' Lots. Theoretically, such lots were devoted to non-resident haoles who were not indigent seamen. Actually, such logical distinctions were not always made. Some old residents were buried in the Seamen's Lot, seamen were buried in private lots, etc. The large number of Strangers' Lots in Section II can mean one or both of two things: A large proportion of haoles dying in Honolulu in the early days were transient or semi-transient people, or the lack of markers and subsequent loss of records makes the tenants unidentifiable.

Lots 163, 163A and 164. Lot 163 passed from E. C. Webster, an American merchant, to General William Miller, the British Consul. Later it became (with extension, 163A) a British Naval Lot (first burial, February 19, 1858). Lot 164 was the British Hospital Lot and later a Naval Lot also (first burial, September 8, 1846). The U.S. Hospital appears to have funneled most of its failures into the Seamen's Lot. Between the cemetery's opening and the end of February, 1861, records show 10 deaths in the British Hospital, 75 in the U.S. Hospital, and 30 in "hospital" or "marine hospital"—probably the U.S.

institution. A handful embarked on their last journey from City Hospital, Dr. Ford's hospital, or the Queen's Hospital.

Lot 167. W. C. Parke and (originally) R. A. S. Wood were the owners, who acquired title from a merchant, J. G. Munn. Parke, born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire in 1821, was for thirty-four years Marshal of the Hawaiian Kingdom (1850-1884). "He had the final honor of being dismissed for lack of pliability to the corrupt Gibson government."<sup>52</sup>

Lots 168 and 170A. Hawaiian Lodge No. 21, F. & A.M. Acquired through a series of transfers. The lodge was instituted early in 1852 (first burial, September 11, 1852).

Lot 170. Grimes. This was originally John Meek's lot. Eliab and Hiram Grimes were partners in an early American business in Hawaii, and were shipmasters. Eliab died in San Francisco, aged 69. Apparently his tombstone is without an accompanying grave, according to cemetery records. The headstones of Hiram F. Grimes and Elizabeth W. Grimes, children of Hiram, give the earliest dates (1842 and 1843) in the cemetery. Doubtless the children were re-interred here after Grimes bought the lot. Eliab Grimes, Hiram's uncle, had gone to San Francisco in 1842; Hiram followed in the late 1840's, and this doubtless accounts for the sparse population of the Grimes lot.<sup>53</sup>

Lots 171, 171A and 171B. Lodge Le Progres de l'Oceanie, No. 371, F. & A.M. The lodge was instituted in 1842, and is listed as the original owner of Lot No. 172. Lot 171 originally belonged to H. Grimes.

Lot 172. Joseph Booth, a well-known hotel and tavern keeper (Blonde, International) in Honolulu for decades, was also the entrepreneur of Little Greenwich, the British hospital that replaced its odious downtown predecessor in 1845-1846. Booth arrived in Hawaii in 1833.<sup>54</sup>

Lot 173. Thomas Cummins, an early-day merchant, established his business in Honolulu at a date specified on his headstone; this also gives other biographical data about the deceased.

Lots 175 and 175A. This lot, transferred from Joseph Booth to John Meek, became the lot of Honolulu Harbor No. 54, American Association of Masters, Mates and Pilots, and another reminder of Honolulu's maritime past. Meek is buried in Lot 175. At his death, aged eighty-three, Meek was Hawaii's oldest foreign resident, having visited Hawaii first in 1809. He became a permanent resident in 1825. A plain and bluff type, Meek was friend and adviser of Hawaiian kings and chiefs, and for many years Honolulu pilot and harbor master. He was one of the ten who instituted Lodge Le Progres.<sup>55</sup>

Lot 176. William Sumner and Henry Sea. Sumner came to Hawaii in 1807, and lived here for over forty years, spending most of that time as captain of various government and coasting vessels. Sea arrived in 1842 as Sir George Simpson's secretary. The next year he was secretary of the British Commission government, and later High Sheriff of Oahu.<sup>56</sup> He married Sumner's daughter.



Lot 177. W. A. Cooper (makai-ewa corner). This lot shows but one headstone, but sixteen others (including two other Coopers) lie here. Original owner: F. W. Thompson. This is another "Strangers' Lot".

Lots 182, 183. G.A.R. Lots. These, so familiar in older mainland cemeteries, shelter men who served the Union in the War Between the States. Corner markers are old cannon stuck muzzle-up in the ground.

Lots 180A and 184. Alexander J. Cartwright, buried in Lot 184, was a resident of Honolulu from 1849 to his death. He was a prominent businessman and estate trustee.

Lot 185. Auld. The chief interest of this lot is the double grave of the old Scots "croanies", Alexander Adams and Andrew Auld. Adams was a shipmaster for Kamehameha I and a long-time Honolulu Harbor pilot. This man of eminent survivability arrived in Hawaii in 1810, lived here for sixty-one years, and was at his death " . . . the last link between the age of Hawaiian barbarism and that of the Fifth Kamehameha."<sup>57</sup> Auld, a skilled craftsman, came to Hawaii in 1825.<sup>58</sup>

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13 (part), 14 (part), 17, 18, 21 (part), 36, 37, 43, 46, 52-65, 85, 107, 112, 113, 114 (part), 119, 120, 121, 122, 126, 155, 156, 162A, 166, 166B, 169, 169A, 175 (part), 177 (part), 179, 183, graves above 183A and 187, and above 191 (next to Smith's Lane). Strangers' Lots.

Lots 15 and 15A. Lodge Le Progres de l'Oceanie. Original owner was G. T. Allan.

Lot 19. Excelsior Lodge, IOOF. Transferred from Charles Brewer to Benjamin Pitman (first burial—Pitman—September 11, 1845). The lodge was instituted December 10, 1846.

Lot 20. Seamen's Bethel. Transferred from Charles Brewer to Seamen's Chaplaincy (first burial, May 25, 1850). The Bethel lots were used in early days chiefly for burial of passengers who died aboard ship in Honolulu Harbor or who expired soon after landing.

Lot 23. Purchased by A. S. Cleghorn, father of Princess Kaiulani. He and his daughter are buried across Nuuanu Avenue in the Royal Mausoleum.

Lot 25. Transferred from William Paty to James Robinson and Co., the famous pioneer shipbuilding firm. In 1946, the remains of Robinson's partners, Holt and Lawrence, were moved from the old Robinson vault to this lot. Robinson is not buried in Oahu Cemetery.

Lot 26. James I. Dowsett, transferred from William Paty. Dowsett, Sr., was a trusted counsellor of Kamehamehas IV and V. Dowsett burials are also in the adjoining Lot 20A and in Lot 185.

Lot 27. John Paty. The Paty brothers—John, William and Henry, were early Honolulu merchants and seafarers of American ancestry. Captain John, who survived his brothers for many years, was a leading resident and officially senior captain of the Hawaiian fleet. Paty went to sea at fifteen in 1822. He was a captain at twenty-one, and during forty years of command the only

thing he ever lost was a single spar once during a gale. Paty first came to Honolulu in 1834.<sup>59</sup>

Lot 32. Lorrin Andrews, Sr. and A. G. Thurston. Andrews lived forty years in Hawaii, having arrived in 1828. He was a missionary, later served the Hawaiian government as judge in foreigners' cases, and compiled a Hawaiian dictionary. A. G. Thurston was the son of the Rev. Asa Thurston, a missionary. The lot's original owner was John Ricord, Attorney General of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

Lot 34. The Rev. S. C. Damon, owner, was for 42 years the much-esteemed Seamen's Chaplain at Honolulu, and long served as the cemetery's secretary-treasurer and chief support.

Lot 35. John Dominis, sea captain and original owner, disappeared at sea in 1846. His son, John O., was the husband of Queen Liliuokalani. The elder Dominis built Washington Place, now the home of Hawaii's governors. The captain's widow, Mrs. Mary Dominis, is buried in this lot.

Lot 38. G. P. Judd. Dr. Judd was first a mission doctor, then a pioneer official of the Hawaiian Kingdom, serving many years and occupying a number of high positions. At the end of his life he headed the Islands' first medical school.

Lot 40. Ladd. Ladd & Co. was a prominent early business house; its failure triggered one of Hawaii's most celebrated civil cases. William Ladd was a partner; John, buried here on October 11, 1859, was not.

Lot 42. John Thomas Waterhouse, who set up business in Honolulu in 1851, became one of the city's leading merchants and founder of a kamaaina family. He was born in England, but came to Hawaii from Australia. "He often said that if he had accepted an offer made in 1836 of thirty acres located in what is now the center of Chicago for a few hundred dollars he might have been the wealthiest man in that city."<sup>60</sup>

Lot 46. Charles W. Vincent was the leading builder in Honolulu in the 1850's. After leaving the Islands he was murdered by Indians and buried at Guaymas Ranch, Mexico. His lot became a Strangers' Lot.

Lots 49 and 50. Samuel G. Wilder was a pioneer railroad and steamship executive and at the time of his death president of the legislature. He is buried in Lot 49. Wilder arrived in Hawaii in 1857, eventually became a member of the house of nobles, and served government as a cabinet minister.<sup>61</sup>

Lots 51 and 77. J. G. Dickson, a well-known businessman, was a partner in the early business firm of Lewers and Dickson.

Lot 67. C. C. Harris held a long list of important public offices between 1854 and his death in 1881, including those of attorney general and chief justice of the Hawaiian supreme court. He came to Hawaii in August, 1850, and at once began law practice.<sup>62</sup>

Lots 71 and 73. Dr. John Mott-Smith, founder of a prominent Hawaiian family, was an American dentist who combined professional practice with a long and notable career of public service. Between 1853 and 1892 he occupied

many diplomatic, ministerial and other posts. He arrived in Hawaii in 1851 after two years as a California Forty-niner.<sup>63</sup>

**Lots 88-97. Old Fire Company Lots.** In 1863 the Honolulu fire companies tried to buy a cemetery lot, with the understanding that the usual burial fees would be remitted. Cemetery trustees took a dim view of this, but the companies did later secure a 24 by 48 foot lot. In the latter part of 1865 the firemen received a cast-iron fence "of an appropriate pattern" from Boston to enclose their acquisition.<sup>64</sup> The first burial in the lot had taken place on May 27. The obelisk now ornamenting the lot was, as it indicates, installed in 1885. It cost \$615 and was at that time the largest monument in the burying ground.<sup>65</sup> The cast iron fence has long since gone. These fences were nineteenth-century favorites. A typical but small-scale example surrounds Capt. Meacham's grave in the British Naval Lot (No. 163).

**Lot 110.** In 1855 this lot passed from the estate of William Paty to Capt. B. F. Snow, mariner and merchant of early Honolulu. Snow first visited Hawaii in 1825 and moved to Honolulu with his family in 1848. He was an active fire company engineer.<sup>66</sup>

**Lot 116.** This was another Bethel Lot (first burial, November 21, 1848). The sixteen bodies interred here were nearly all—if not all—those of ship passengers overtaken by death in Honolulu. The lot was given to the Bethel by Charles Brewer in October, 1848.

**Lot 117.** In 1852 George Pelly of the Hudson's Bay Company transferred this lot to the Rev. Lowell Smith of Kaumakapili Church. In 1859, when the cemetery was bursting full, nine foreigners—presumably seamen—were buried here. The Rev. Smith arrived in Hawaii in 1833 and moved to Honolulu in 1836; ". . . probably no person ever won the confidence of the natives to the degree that he did, or did more to counteract the pernicious influence of the native kahunas or sorcerers."<sup>67</sup> He was B. F. Dillingham's father-in-law.

**Lot 118. Old U.S. Navy Lot.** When the new lot was acquired, the old burials here (the first one recorded on October 26, 1853) were transferred. Only six interments were listed between 1853 and the end of February, 1861.

**Lot 125. Edwin Oscar Hall.** This man was early associated with the American mission in Hawaii, and later became a leading businessman, editor, and public official.

**Lot 14, Sect. III.** The old headstone in this lot (just above the mauka-ewa corner of the new U.S. Navy Lot) was erected in the 1850's. It preserves the memory of sundry members of the *Havannah's* crew who died in many climes.

**Lot 235. U.S. Navy Lot,** just makai of the original cemetery boundary. The markers in this lot give many evidences of loyal affection and remembrance. "Erected by his shipmates" is the common denominator of the headstones here. The most interesting is that commemorating the sacrifice of the men who in 1870 sailed from Ocean Island (Kure) to Honolulu in search of help for the stranded crew of the U.S.S. *Saginaw*. The ship grounded some 70 miles west of Midway on October 30. She broke up on November 14, and

four days later the executive officer and four other volunteers set out for Honolulu in the ship's gig. They weathered three gales, but lost all their oars. Nearly comatose from privation and exhaustion, they sighted Kauai on December 18. But the wind shifted, and they drifted away. With supreme effort they beat up again on the night of December 19. On approaching the shore near Hanalei, the gig was caught in the breakers and capsized, beyond the control of its occupants. Three men drowned and one died along the shore road, but the fifth survived to pass on his message. On December 25 the *Kilauea*, Capt. Thomas Long, left Honolulu. She made Ocean Island on January 3, 1871, found the *Saginaw's* 93 men in good condition, and returned with them on January 14 after a voyage of 2,850 miles in nineteen days.<sup>68</sup>

### *The Sources*

Materials dealing with the Oahu Cemetery at the Archives of Hawaii are of the usual type: official correspondence, land records, and newspaper notices. In addition, specialized records exist at the cemetery itself and at the Hawaiian Trust Company, the cemetery's records depositor.

*The Cemetery* maintains a card file of burials, giving section and lot number, arranged alphabetically by name of the deceased. It also has a series of loose-leaf booklets in which, drawn on graph paper, are the lots and the arrangement of burials within each lot. These detailed "records" were produced during the 1940's and 1950's, for the most part. Doubtless many of them—especially those that depict more recently occupied sections of the cemetery, and that deal with privately-owned lots—are highly accurate. But there is serious question concerning the validity of those sketches that purport to show who lies where in Strangers' Lots, the Seamen's Lot, and the Captains' Lot. Most of these graves are unmarked, and a disastrous fire which swept cemetery offices many years ago dealt widespread destruction to old records. A third source of information at the cemetery is a multi-volume record of burials. Vol. I, which begins in 1842 (the Grimes child), covers the period surveyed in this history. It has many information gaps; sometimes names of those buried are not given; more often there are penciled-in question marks in the column supposed to indicate section and lot of interment. Some entries specify age, place of origin, occupation, etc., but most lack such details.

Surprisingly, no burial records were kept until 1849. Late in 1847 Damon was appointed to draw up a list of interments made and to keep a register of the future burials. He had much trouble in trying to frame a report covering the period from the cemetery's opening through 1848, and admitted the possibility of mistakes. Most of those buried had been strangers, and one purpose of the compilation was to answer the inquiries of friends or relatives of the deceased. In some cases, survivors might want to erect monuments.

Damon's account showed 81 interments to January 1, 1849. To ensure future accuracy, he asked that whenever a burial occurred, the "parties concerned" send him a written report.<sup>69</sup>

*The Hawaiian Trust Company* preserves, besides a file of cemetery maps, a number of other records. These are:

1. A large bound volume of "Minutes of the Oahu Cemetery Association, 1844—". Pasted inside the front cover of this are: (a) the original cemetery prospectus, map, and subscription list; (b) a handwritten book of minutes from 1844-1859.

2. A record of lot owners.

3. O.C.A. rent roll, care of lots, 1908-1911.

4. Charter and by-laws of the O.C.A.

5. Book No. 2. Records of the O.C.A., 1859; historical minutes of the formation of the O.C.A.; minutes of trustees' meetings and elections, to October 5, 1871; record of burials, 1860-June, 1863; some of the buyers of new cemetery lots (across Nuuanu Street); accounts, 1873-1879.

6. Book No. 4. Records of burial, by lots, giving old and new lot designations; burials begin with first burial, run up to formation of the O.C.A. An interesting fact is that burial records here do not in all cases agree with those at the cemetery; a chief difference is that in several cases Book No. 4 gives an earlier date for first burials.

7. Book No. 6. Record of lot purchases; record of lot owners, old cemetery and new cemetery.

8. Book No. 8. Accounts, 1844-1869, 1898-1934; cash journal, May 28, 1845-1862.

9. Book No. 9. Receipts, 1905-1922.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> F, Jan. 15, 1846, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> P, June 21, 1845.

<sup>3</sup> June 29.

<sup>4</sup> At Hawaiian Trust Company, pasted inside "Oahu Cemetery Association Minute Book, From 1844 to . . ." Cited hereafter as SB.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Signed by Kamehameha III, Keoni Ana and G. P. Judd. IDLF, Mar. 1846, AH.

<sup>8</sup> Subscription list, SB.

<sup>9</sup> "Proposals . . ." SB.

<sup>10</sup> Aug. 24, 1844.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> SB.

- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>14</sup> O.C.A. Book No. 8, pp. 2, 4. Hawaiian Trust Co.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 5.
- <sup>16</sup> F, Dec. 1844, p. 119.
- <sup>17</sup> O.C.A. Book No. 8, p. 2 ff.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3; letter, J. F. B. Marshall to J. J. Jarves, June 18, 1845. SB.
- <sup>20</sup> Minutes of meetings of June 16 and June 21, 1845. SB; O.C.A. Book No. 8, pp. 2, 4.
- <sup>21</sup> P, June 28, 1845.
- <sup>22</sup> P, June 21, 1845; Minutes of meeting of August 20, 1844. SB.
- <sup>23</sup> P, June 21, 1845.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>26</sup> F, Jan. 15, 1846, p. 13.
- <sup>27</sup> Letter, Capts. W. K. Kilborn, N. Fales, S. Tinkham and others, Oct. 29, 1846; reply, J. F. B. Marshall, Oct. 30. P, Nov. 7, 1846; SB.
- <sup>28</sup> Minutes of meeting of Oct. 27, 1847. SB.
- <sup>29</sup> Minutes of meeting of Feb. 24, 1852. SB.
- <sup>30</sup> Minutes of meeting of Aug. 7, 1855. SB.
- <sup>31</sup> G. P. Judd to Trustees of Nuuanu Valley Cemetery Association, Mar. 1, 1856. Cartwright Collection, AH.
- <sup>32</sup> PCA, Jan. 13, 1859.
- <sup>33</sup> P, Jan. 22, 1859.
- <sup>34</sup> PCA, Jan. 27, 1859.
- <sup>35</sup> See S. C. Damon's records of transfers of lots. SB.
- <sup>36</sup> Jan. 22, 1859.
- <sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, PCA, Aug. 30, 1860; Minutes of meeting of Oct. 27, 1847, SB. Damon served as secretary-treasurer until the O.C.A. was organized.
- <sup>38</sup> O.C.A. Book No. 4, p. 177. Page numbers in this book are keyed to lot numbers.
- <sup>39</sup> PCA, Aug. 30, 1860.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*; Record of Burials, Vol. I, Oahu Cemetery.
- <sup>41</sup> P, June 11, 1859.
- <sup>42</sup> Charter of the O.C.A. Hawaiian Trust Co.; PCR, XI, p. 37, AH; S. Spencer to A. B. Bates, June 21, 1859, IDLB 7, p. 214, AH; P, July 2, 1859.
- <sup>43</sup> O.C.A. Book No. 2, pp. 2-4 and 8, 9; IDLF, Jan. 31, 1860, AH; PCA, Aug. 30, 1860.
- <sup>44</sup> PCA, Aug. 30, 1860.
- <sup>45</sup> Minutes of meetings of Mar. 6, Oct. 18, and Dec. 1860, O.C.A. Book No. 2, pp. 10-14.

- <sup>46</sup> Filed in Hawaiian Trust Company.
- <sup>47</sup> Minutes of meeting of Feb. 14, 1861, O.C.A. Book No. 2, p. 15.
- <sup>48</sup> Measured on copy of map of Mar., 1861. Source of the drawing of the original plot: Grant dated Mar. 1, 1846. IDLF, Mar. 1846.
- <sup>49</sup> Copy of Public Works map of the proposed widening, filed in Hawaiian Trust Co.
- <sup>50</sup> Maps of road widening and of Section I of the Cemetery, Hawaiian Trust Co.
- <sup>51</sup> HG, Sept. 20, 1876.
- <sup>52</sup> F, June, 1889, p. 46.
- <sup>53</sup> H. W. Bradley, *The American Frontier in Hawaii* . . . (Stanford University Press, 1942), p. 233; P, April 24, 1852.
- <sup>54</sup> PCA, Feb. 15, 1868.
- <sup>55</sup> F, Feb. 1875, p. 9.
- <sup>56</sup> P, Sept. 10, 1859.
- <sup>57</sup> F, Dec. 1871, p. 95 (from PCA)
- <sup>58</sup> PCA, Nov. 1, 1873.
- <sup>59</sup> F, Dec. 1868, p. 98.
- <sup>60</sup> PCA, Jan. 9, 1895.
- <sup>61</sup> PCA, July 30, 1888.
- <sup>62</sup> PCA, July 9, 1881.
- <sup>63</sup> PCA, Aug. 12, 1895.
- <sup>64</sup> O.C.A. Book No. 2, p. 19; HG, Oct. 28, 1865.
- <sup>65</sup> PCA, Aug. 5, 1885.
- <sup>66</sup> PCA, Dec. 22, 1866.
- <sup>67</sup> PCA, May 11, 1891.
- <sup>68</sup> HG, Dec. 28, 1870; PCA, July 22, 1871.
- <sup>69</sup> F, Jan., 1849, p. 7.



